

It is with great sadness the FCC would even consider discontinuing the Morse code requirement, element 1. This has been a part of our Amateur Radio heritage, and our great country for hundreds of years. It was an only method of communication when the railroad was brought into existence that helped industrialize our great nation. It continues today, not as a novelty, but as a major source of communication. In natural disasters, i.e., tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, even the attack on the United States on September 11th, voice communication was difficult to establish, cell phones were nonexistent or hard to make calls on. Repeaters, both law enforcement and ham radio, on top of the world trade centers collapsed making communication on the ground next to impossible. Everyone knows it takes less power and antenna restrictions to communicate with Morse code than does voice communication. Why should we keep the code portion of the exam? How can you truly communicate using amateur radio without knowing Morse code? In a true emergency, when all communication is down, which is more complicated to set up and use? Voice radios, using 100's of watts of power needing sensitive and complicated antennas, or Morse code, using as little as 5 watts to communicate and a simple wire (dipole) antenna? Ask yourself the question, if we drop the code requirement, who will take the place of the Amateur Radio operators of today that use this valuable communication scheme of Morse code effectively. If we abolish the code requirement, there will be no one that knows how to use Morse code. Therefore, in all reality, and for a lack of a better way to put it, we will have shot ourselves in the foot. Stand up for what you know is the right thing to do. Keep the code element as part of the requirement for the higher licenses now issued by the FCC. After all, we lowered the standard from 20wpm to 5wpm. Do we want to completely drop our standard and let everyone have free reign. If we drop the code requirement, what is the next step? Perhaps do away with testing altogether?

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